

**King County Agriculture Commission
Minutes from November 9, 2006
Mercer View Community Center
Mercer Island WA**

(Notes from the joint-session with the Forest Commission and the Agriculture Commission will be published jointly.)

Commissioners Present: Nancy Hutto, George Irwin, Grant Davidson, Roger Calhoon, Julie Haakenson, Bob Tidball, Larry Pickering, Judy Taylor, Robert Holland, Ben Kodama

Commissioners Absent: Bob Vos, Michael Blakely, Ewing Stringfellow

Guest Agency Staff: Josh Monaghan, King Conservation District; Todd Murray, Washington State University King County Extension

Guests: Anne Mack, P.L.A.N; Marguerite Sutherland, P.L.A.N; Erik Steffens, Cascade Land Conservancy

The meeting was called to order by Nancy Hutto, Chair; after a joint meeting with the King County Forest Commission.

Decisions Made:

Motion: George Irwin moved and Grant Davidson seconded that the Commission write a letter of support for the proposed “Food and Fitness Initiative” that is being proposed to the Kellogg Foundation under the lead of Washington State University King County Extension and the King County Health Department.

Commission Business:

The Regulatory Committee: handed out a report of its progress on proposing new Deeds and Covenants.

Landowner Incentives: Bob Tidball reported on the workshop in Olympia facilitated by Don Stuart of the American Farmland Trust on “property owner incentives”. The hope is that the state will sponsor an office or programs that will strengthen funding for landowner incentives, and perhaps create a “one-stop shot”.

Slide Show: Comments on preliminary draft included:

- add farm stands; reduce cartoon/we listen series at front; include historical pictures; more accuracy on soils
- seems a bit fragmented: soil and horse slide come out of no way.
- Start with the punch line.

- Rob Holland pointed out that messages are needed for places like the Kent and Auburn Chambers of Commerce who appear to want warehouses, not farms
- Ben noted what farmers markets have done – without them small farm would not exist
- George noted that WSU is studying the size of farms in King County to ask optimum size. One may be not be big enough to sustain, another may be too small for designer veggies. Should farmland preservation be based on some of these results regarding functionality.
- Bob noted that we don't want "just" rural lifestyle. We have been trying to define agriculture.
- Grant noted people are more educated about agriculture than we think... we need to hold their feet to the fire on farmer's markets.
- Let merchants know that these markets increase the value for all, not just agriculture. Fresh food, even once a week, brings people to a mall.

Agency Reports:

Josh Monahan of the KCD:

The District is looking at a new budget process that will put a new emphasis on:

- nutrient management
- free soil analyses for samples sent to them
- support for "sustainable agriculture" whether through schools or other avenues. They are looking for input on this topic.

The State Organization of Conservation Districts is putting together a state organization for Farmland Preservation Programs based on models in other states.

Please let potentially interested landowners know that researchers want to do mortality compositing on farms with livestock carcasses.

Todd Murray of Washington State King County Extension:

- Classes are wrapping up but will continue into January.
- Small Farm Expo is being planned; notify them if you want a booth.
- WSU is looking livestock enterprises that would work with them on research on Integrated Pest Management.